

In The Claims

Kindly enter the claim amendments, without prejudice, as set forth below. A complete listing of the claims is provided, with a parenthetical indication of the status of each claim and markings to show current changes.

CLAIMS

1. (original) Continuous metallic strip casting plant, comprising:
  - an ingot mould (1), having a pair of counter rotating rolls (2, 2'), adapted to continuously cast a metallic strip (N) along a vertical casting direction;
  - conveying means (6) of said metallic strip, located downstream of said casting direction, adapted to transfer the metallic strip to following processing stations;
  - a mobile deflecting device (5), located lower than said counter rotating rolls and able to deflect an initial portion of the metallic strip deviating it towards said conveying means (6) and, in addition, adapted to pass from a standby position, of not interference with said metallic strip (N), to an operative position of interference with said metallic strip (N), whereby it deflects the initial portion of the strip from the vertical casting direction, characterised by the fact that there are provided motor means for translating said mobile deflecting device (5) along a substantially horizontal rectilinear trajectory from the standby position to the operative position of interference.
2. (previously presented) The plant according to claim 1, wherein said deflector device (5) provides a rounded edge (9) in the foremost part with respect to the casting plane.
3. (currently amended) A method for continuous metallic strip casting by means of a plant according to claim 1 ~~one or more of the preceding claims~~, comprising the following operations:
  - casting of an initial portion of metallic strip of predetermined length in a vertical direction through an ingot mould (1) with counter rotating rolls (2, 2');
  - placing said deflecting device in a interference position with the vertical strip casting direction.

- when the leading edge of the strip begins to rest upon the surfaces of the deflecting device (5) and to deviate from said substantially vertical path of advancement, making the deflecting device (5) to translate in a horizontal direction such as to deviate the advancing path of the initial strip portion and make it assume a substantially horizontal moving direction;
- approaching the strip leading edge, through further translation of said deflecting device (5), towards holding and/or drawing devices to grip the front edge of the strip and draw it towards predetermined processing stations;
- translating in a horizontal direction said deflecting device (5) in a direction of its removal from the strip.